

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
EASTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA**

MARK PIERCE,

Plaintiff,

v.

SGT. WILLIAMS, et al.,

Defendants.

No. CIV 20-284-RAW-SPS

OPINION AND ORDER

Plaintiff is a pro se state prisoner in the custody of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections who is incarcerated at Dick Conner Correctional Center in Hominy, Oklahoma. He filed this civil rights complaint pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 in the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma, while housed at John H. Lilley Correctional Center in Boley, Oklahoma (Dkt. 1). The Western District then transferred the case to this Court for proper venue (Dkt. 7).

Plaintiff alleges that mentally ill prisoners in John Lilley Correctional Center are taunted and mistreated by prison officials, and these actions create dangerous situations in the prisoner cells (Dkt. 1 at 5-6). The defendants are Sgt. Williams, Sgt. Shields, Sgt. Anderson, and John Lilley Correctional Center. After review of the complaint, the Court finds Plaintiff must file an amended civil rights complaint on the Court's form, as set forth below.

Screening/Dismissal Standards

Federal courts must engage in a preliminary screening of cases in which prisoners seek redress from a governmental entity or officer or employee of a governmental entity. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(a). The Court must identify any cognizable claims and dismiss any claims that are frivolous, malicious, fail to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or seek

monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b); 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

The pleading standard for all civil actions was articulated in *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544 (2007). See *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 684 (2009). To avoid dismissal for failure to state a claim under Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6), a complaint must present factual allegations, assumed to be true, that “raise a right to relief above the speculative level.” *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555. The complaint also must contain “enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.” *Id.* at 570. A court must accept all the well-pleaded allegations of the complaint as true, even if doubtful in fact, and must construe the allegations in the light most favorable to the plaintiff. *Id.* at 555-56. “So, when the allegations in a complaint, however true, could not raise a claim of entitlement to relief,” the cause of action should be dismissed. *Id.* at 558. The Court applies the same standard of review for dismissals under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii) that is employed for Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6) motions to dismiss for failure to state a claim. *Kay v. Bemis*, 500 F.3d 1214, 1217-18 (10th Cir. 2007).

A pro se plaintiff’s complaint must be broadly construed under this standard. *Erickson v. Pardus*, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007); *Haines v. Kerner*, 404 U.S. 519, 520 (1972). The generous construction given to the pro se litigant’s allegations, however, “does not relieve the plaintiff of the burden of alleging sufficient facts on which a recognized legal claim could be based.” *Hall v. Bellmon*, 935 F.2d 1106, 1110 (10th Cir. 1991). Notwithstanding a pro se plaintiff’s various mistakes or misunderstandings of legal doctrines or procedural requirements, “if a court can reasonably read the pleadings to state a valid claim on which the plaintiff could prevail, it should do so” *Id.* A reviewing court need not accept “mere conclusions characterizing pleaded facts.” *Bryson v. City of Edmond*, 905 F.2d 1386,

1390 (10th Cir. 1990). “While a complaint attacked by a Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss does not need detailed factual allegations, a plaintiff’s obligation to provide the grounds of his entitlement to relief requires more than labels and conclusions, and a formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action will not do.” *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555 (quotations and citations omitted). The Court “will not supply additional factual allegations to round out a plaintiff’s complaint or construct a legal theory on a plaintiff’s behalf.” *Whitney v. New Mexico*, 113 F.3d 1170, 1173-74 (10th Cir. 1997).

Amended Complaint

Within twenty-one (21) days of the entry of this Order, Plaintiff must file an amended complaint on this Court’s form. The amended complaint must set forth the full name of each person he is suing under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, with each defendant listed in both the caption and the body of the document. Further, the names in the caption of the amended complaint must be identical to those contained in the body of the amended complaint, pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 10(a). Plaintiff is responsible for providing sufficient information for service of process. *See Lee v. Armontrout*, 991 F.2d 487, 489 (8th Cir. 1993) (plaintiff proceeding *in forma pauperis* and pro se had responsibility to provide correct names and proper addresses for service of process).

Plaintiff has named the John Lilley Correctional Center as a defendant in this case (Dkt. 2 at 1). A prison facility, however, is not a suable entity under § 1983. *See, e.g., Krebs v. El Dorado Corr. Facility*, 673 F. App’x 891, 893-94 (10th Cir. 2016) (“[Plaintiff] asserts claims against fifteen State correctional facilities. But States and their agencies are not persons subject to suit under section 1983.”) (citing *Will v. Michigan Dep’t of State Police*, 491 U.S. 58, 64 (1989)). Therefore, John Lilley Correctional Center is DISMISSED from this action. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b); 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

The amended complaint must include a short and plain statement of when and how each named defendant violated Plaintiff's constitutional rights and showing Plaintiff is entitled to relief from each named defendant. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 8(a). Plaintiff also shall identify a specific constitutional basis for each claim. *See id.* He is admonished that simply alleging that a defendant is an employee or supervisor of a state agency is inadequate to state a claim. Plaintiff must go further and state how the named defendant's personal participation violated his constitutional rights. The "denial of a grievance, by itself without any connection to the violation of constitutional rights alleged by the plaintiff, does not establish personal participation under § 1983." *Gallagher v. Shelton*, 587 F.3d 1063, 1069 (10th Cir. 2009) (citations omitted). The Court only will consider claims "based upon the violation of a plaintiff's personal rights, and not the rights of someone else." *Archuleta v. McShan*, 897 F.2d 495, 497 (10th Cir. 1990).

The Tenth Circuit has explained that when a § 1983 plaintiff includes a "government agency and a number of government actors sued in their individual capacities," then "it is particularly important . . . that the complaint make clear exactly *who* is alleged to have done *what to whom*, to provide each individual with fair notice as to the basis of the claims against him or her, as distinguished from collective allegations against the state." *Robbins v. Oklahoma*, 519 F.3d 1242, 1249-50 (10th Cir. 2008) (emphasis in original). When a plaintiff instead uses "either the collective term 'Defendants' or a list of defendants named individually but with no distinction as to what acts are attributable to whom, it is impossible for any of these individuals to ascertain what particular unconstitutional acts they are alleged to have committed." *Id.* at 1250 (citation omitted).


The amended complaint must include all claims and supporting material to be considered by the Court. *See* Local Civil Rule 9.2(c). It may not include defendants or

claims that have been dismissed by this Opinion and Order. It must be complete in itself, including exhibits, and may not reference or attempt to incorporate material from the original complaint or exhibits. *Id.* An amended complaint completely replaces the original complaint and renders the original complaint of no legal effect. *See Miller v. Glanz*, 948 F.2d 1562, 1565 (10th Cir. 1991); *Gilles v. United States*, 906 F.2d 1386, 1389 (10th Cir. 1990). *See also* Local Civil Rule 9.2(c). Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 5.2(a), the amended complaint must be clearly legible, and only one side of the paper may be used. In addition, the margins on additional sheets of paper shall be a minimum of one (1) inch on the top, bottom, and sides, and Plaintiff shall write on only one side of the page of any submitted documents. *See* Local Civil Rule 5.2(a). The Court Clerk is directed to send Plaintiff a form for filing an amended complaint. Plaintiff is granted twenty-one (21) days to file his amended complaint.

ACCORDINGLY,

1. Defendant John Lilley Correctional Center is DISMISSED from this action.
2. Plaintiff is directed to file within twenty-one (21) days an amended complaint on the Court's form as directed in this Opinion and Order.
3. The Court Clerk is directed to send Plaintiff a copy of the form for filing an amended civil rights complaint in this Court.
4. Failure to comply with this Opinion and Order will result in dismissal of this action without further notice.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 6th day of October 2020.


Ronald A. White
United States District Judge
Eastern District of Oklahoma